Statement

District-wise number of branch post offices working at present in Himachal Pradesh

Sl.No.	Name of District	Number of Branch post offices
1.	Bilaspur	115
2.	Chamba	196
3.	Hamirpur	173
4.	Kangra	536
5.	Kinnaur	59
6.	Kullu	129
7.	Lahaul & Spiti	38
a	Mandi	307
9.	Shimla	280
10.	Sirmour	157
11.	Solan	152
11	Una	150
	TOTAL	2292

Constituency-wise Number of branch post offices working at present m Himachal Pradesh

SL No.	Name of Constituency	Number of Branch post offices
1.	Hamirpur	533
2.	Mandi	610
3.	Shimla	554
4.	Kangra	595
	TOTAL	2292

Duty on Cellular Pbones

792. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact mat the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) has proposed duty on cellular phones;

(b) if so, what is the mechanism evolved to enforce it; and

(c) by when it would be brought into force?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRITAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c)The Central Board of Excise & Customs had not made any proposal regarding duty on cellular phones. However, the Government as part of the Budget 2002-2003 has decided to exempt cellular phones and pagers from countervailing duty. The basic customs duty has been increased from 5% to 10%. The effective duty on cellular phones has been brought down from 26.67% (Basic 5%, CVD 16% & SAD 4%) to 14.4% (Basic 10%, CVD 0% & SAD 4%).

Village public telephones

793. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of village public telephones commissioned by private basic telecom service operators during the years 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and first 9 months of 2001 -2002 togetherwith the target for the corresponding period, circle-wise, company-wise and year-wise;

(b) the corresponding number of BSNL and erstwhile DoT, circle-wise and year-wise; and

(c) the action contemplated by Government on companies who default on rollout conditions on VPTs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The requisite information is enclosed as Statement-I (Seebelow)

(b) The requisite information is enclosed as Statement-II (See below)

(c) Government has recovered Liquidated Damage (LD) charges for their delay in performance and made it clear that their committed performance obligations cannot be diluted in any case. Government has asked them to complete the unfulfilled committed roll out obligations by December, 2002 against submission of Additional Performance Bank Guarantees and Deed of Guarantees. Further, Government has already taken appropriate steps to resolve their problems.